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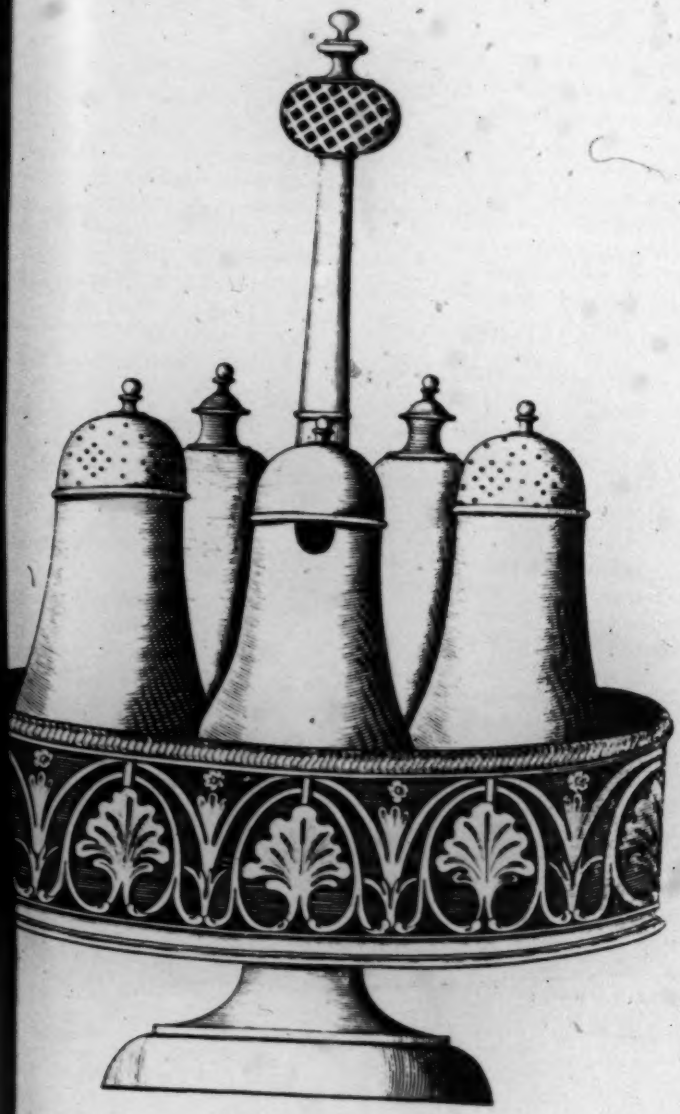
English Creamware



1968

Creamware (or cream-coloured lead-glazed earthenware) was evolved in Staffordshire during the middle years of the 18th century. No definite information can be given about its invention, or about the latest date of its manufacture, since it was a gradual development within the main stream of English pottery, which by successive technical refinements in the late 18th and early 19th century evolved into the white earthenware that we use today. In effect, creamware was the first industrialised pottery to be produced in the world, and its history is essentially the history of the Industrial Revolution as it affected the British potteries.

Since the importation of Chinese porcelain into Europe in the late 17th century potters everywhere tried to imitate this refined and practical material. This was widely achieved by the middle of the 18th century, but porcelain, both imported and home produced, remained costly, and was used only by the rich. For humbler markets, the earthenware manufacturers had developed salt-glazed stoneware and tin-glazed types of faience, such as delftware. By the early 18th century, the leading Staffordshire potters had taken up production of stoneware, which had been considerably improved in both colour and texture by the use of ground calcined flint and white clays from Dorset and Devon. It was from this that creamware developed, and in fact many of the factories appear to have made both types concurrently for some time, common moulds being used for casting both salt-glazed and lead-glazed wares. From about 1760, salt-glazed stoneware was gradually superseded by lead-glazed creamware, the latter being produced by the better earthenware potteries not only in Staffordshire, but in many other parts of the country. The Staffordshire potteries maintained their lead however, and it was there that the main technical advances were made.

The years from about 1760 to 1800 must be considered as the high point of creamware production, when technique, design, and decoration were at their best. During these decades, the wares exemplify a vigorous rustic version of the currently fashionable rococo style, which was gradually transmuted during the period of the Classic Revival to produce the elegant and refined pieces which we now rate as masterpieces of industrial pottery.

Since creamware was intended as a cheaper product comparable in style and use to porcelain, much effort went towards making it as white as possible, and the warm yellowish colour which we find so attractive today, was then considered an imperfection. In the pursuit of an ideal white ware, potters began to use a bluish glaze. In this glaze first used about 1780, the cream tinge, caused by impurities, was counteracted by a minute quantity of cobalt oxide. Creamware glazed in this way was known as "pearl ware". It was not until the early 19th century that the pure white glazed earthenware now so common to us, was finally achieved by the potters.

The successful and efficient export marketing of English creamware caused a commercial revolution on the European continent, bringing ruin to many potteries there, which were unable to produce a ware of such fine quality at such economic prices and in such wide a range of articles. Towards the end of the 18th century many Continental factories were thus obliged to imitate creamware themselves. This fact, as well as the interruption of trade caused by the Napoleonic Wars, virtually put an end to the export of creamware and several factories which had come to have heavy dependence on exports, such as the Leeds Pottery and the Turner factory at Lane End, suffered consequent bankruptcy.

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CATAL UE

A travellin ibition arranged by the Circulation Department of the Victoria and Albert Museum.

All measure s are in centimetres

Case I: C amware with under-glaze colouring

1. Tortoises ware teapot. Applied vine decoration, thr paw feet, crabstock spout and handle. D ppled with manganese oxide under the gla . On-glaze gilding. Staffordshire. Circa 1750.
H. 12.8 L. 19 261&A–1870

2. Figure of a grenadier on horseback. Dappled with manganese and copper oxide under the glaze. Staffordshire. Circa 1750.
H. 19.5 L. 14 134A–1874
Purchased from the Haliburton Collection.

3. Tortoiseshell ware teapot. Applied floral decoration. Crabstock handle and spout. Dappled with copper, manganese, cobalt, and iron oxides under the glaze. Staffordshire. Circa 1755.
H. 9 L. 17 Circ.432&A–1967
Mrs. M. B. Sargeant Bequest.

4. Tortoiseshell ware coffee pot. Rococo scrollwork spout, crabstock handle. Dappled mainly with manganese oxide, and with touches of iron and copper oxides under the glaze. Staffordshire. Circa 1755.
H. 17.5 L. 15 Circ.39&A–1929

5. Miniature teapot. Applied moulded decoration. Staffordshire, or perhaps Leeds pottery. Circa 1755.
H. 8 L. 12.2 Circ.360&A–1923

6. Tortoiseshell ware plate. Dappled with manganese and copper oxides under the glaze. Staffordshire. Circa 1760.
D. 24.3 2131–1901
Museum of Practical Geology Collection.

7. Two-handled cup of tortoiseshell ware. Loop handles with pinched ends. Dappled with manganese, copper, and iron oxides under the glaze. Staffordshire. Circa 1760.
H. 9.2 W. 11.1 Circ. 764–1925

8. Figure of a squirrel eating a nut. Moulded. Dappled with manganese and copper oxides under the glaze. Probably Staffordshire. Circa 1765.
H. 16.5 W. 13.5 130–1874
Purchased from the Haliburton Collection.

9. Teapot with moulded *chinoiserie* decoration. Splashed with copper and manganese oxides under the glaze. Scroll handle, fern pattern spout. Probably made by Josiah Wedgwood from a mould pattern by William Greatbatch. Circa 1765.
H. 13.3 L. 18 Circ.361&A–1923

10. Teapot with moulded decoration of a landscape. Splashed with copper, manganese, iron, and cobalt oxides under the glaze. Scroll handle, acanthus and bead spout. Probably made from a mould pattern by William Greatbatch. Circa 1765.
H. 14.2 L. 22 C.21&A–1940
Arthur Hurst Bequest.

11. Small jug with moulded decoration of fruit and basketwork. Splashed with copper, cobalt, manganese, and iron oxides under the glaze. Possibly Derby Pottery, Cockpit Hill. Circa 1765.
H. 13.6 W. 11.1 Circ.453–1967
Mrs. M. B. Sargeant Bequest.

12. Teapot moulded in the form of a cauliflower. Coloured with copper oxide and glazed. Scroll handle, cauliflower spout. Probably made by Josiah Wedgwood from a mould pattern by William Greatbatch. Circa 1765.
H. 11.6 L. 16.3 2272–1901
Museum of Practical Geology Collection.

13. Plate with moulded cauliflower pattern decoration. Coloured with copper oxide and glazed. Probably made by Josiah Wedgwood from a mould pattern by William Greatbatch. Circa 1765.
D. 19.5 C.22–1940
Arthur Hurst Bequest.

14. Figure of a bird. Moulded. Decorated with touches of iron oxide under the glaze. Probably Staffordshire. Circa 1770.
H. 7.6 L. 6.5 Circ.454–1967
Mrs. M. B. Sargeant Bequest.

15. Figure of a cock. Moulded. Decorated with touches of copper and iron oxides under the glaze. Leeds Pottery. Circa 1770.
H. 7.6 L. 7 Circ.456–1967
Mrs. M. B. Sargeant Bequest.

16. Figure of Neptune, standing on a square plinth decorated with classical urns in relief. Moulded. Coloured mainly with manganese, copper, and iron oxides under the glaze. Ralph Wood the Elder, Burslem. Circa 1770.
H. 28.7 W. 8.8 Circ.461–1967
Mrs. M. B. Sargeant Bequest.

17. Figure of Charity. Moulded. Coloured mainly with manganese, copper, and cobalt oxides under the glaze. Ralph Wood the Elder, Burslem. Circa 1770.
H. 19.5 W. 7.5 Circ.463–1967
Mrs. M. B. Sargeant Bequest.

18. Teapot. Moulded and pierced decoration. Painted under the glaze with stripes of copper oxide. Leeds Pottery. Circa 1775.
H. 14 L. 18.8 C.242&A–1914
Mrs. Kate Bentley Gift.

19. Miniature teapot. Moulded decoration, loop handle with flower terminals. Painted under the glaze with stripes of copper oxide. Leeds Pottery. Circa 1775.
H. 9 L. 13.5 Circ.437–1967
Mrs. M. B. Sargeant Bequest.

Case II: Creamware with enamel-painted decoration

1. Teapot with a painting of two lovers; on the reverse, a shepherd playing bagpipes. Painted in polychrome in the style of enamelling on salt-glaze ware. Crabstock handle and spout. Probably Staffordshire. Circa 1760.
H. 12 L. 20.5 Circ.534&A–1925

2. Teapot with painting of conventionalised buildings in a landscape, and scrollwork, divided by a central band of impressed patterning. Enamelled in black and brick red, in the style of David Rhodes. Crabstock handle and spout. Leeds Pottery. Circa 1770.
H. 14.5 L. 20.8 Circ.763&A–1925

3. Teapot with decoration of exotic birds painted in brick red, black, and deep pink enamels, and gilt. Double intertwined and and twisted handle with terminals, fluted spout with leaves at the base. Probably Leeds Pottery. Circa 1770.
H. 17 L. 21 Stoke-on-Trent Loan 5&A

4. Teapot with decoration of patterned bands diagonally crossing, with in-fillings of conventional flower sprigs. Painted in black, dark red, green, yellow, and purple in the style of David Rhodes. Double intertwined handle with terminals. Leeds Pottery. Circa 1770.
H. 16 L. 18.6 C.213&A–1939
Miss Lily Antrobus Gift.

5. Teapot with polychrome *chinoiserie* decoration and traces of gilding. Double intertwined handle with terminals. Convolvulous flower knob. Probably Leeds Pottery. Circa 1775.
H. 12 L. 17 Circ.249&A–1928

6. Teapot with decoration of floral sprigs painted in brick red. Acanthus-based spout, double intertwined reeded handle with terminals, flower knob. Leeds Pottery. Circa 1775.
H. 14 L. 22.5 Circ.30&A–1962

7. Cup and saucer with decoration of floral sprigs painted in brick red. Double intertwined reeded handle with terminals. Leeds Pottery. Circa 1775.
H. of cup 7.1 D. of saucer 13.5
Circ.438&A–1967
Mrs. M. B. Sargeant Bequest.

8. Covered sugar bowl with decoration of floral sprigs painted in brick red, yellow, green and mauve. Double intertwined reeded handles with terminals, flower knob. Leeds Pottery. Circa 1775.
H. 10.2 W. 11.9 Circ.[illegible]A–1925

9. Dish, moulded with flutes and with pierced decoration. Painted with flower sprigs in green and black. Perhaps Leeds Pottery. Circa 1775.
L. 20.1 W. 17.5 Circ.558–1926
Mits Falcke Gift.

10. Plate with moulded "Feather Edge", painted with a pattern of husks and flowers in green and black. Probably Leeds Pottery. Circa 1775.
D. 22.6 3221–1853
Hailstone Gift.

11. Shell-shaped dish, with naturalistic painting of a sprig of sweet pea and other plants in magenta enamel. Probably Wedgwood, Etruria with painting possibly by James Bakewell. Circa 1775.
L. 19.9 W. 14.5 C.71–1914
Miss Lily Antrobus Gift.

12. Plate with moulded "Shell Edge", painted with floral sprigs in emerald green and black. Wedgwood (marked), Etruria. Circa 1780.
D. 19.4 Circ.1143–1967
D. A. MacAlister Gift.

13. Coffee pot painted with a large floral spray on either side in polychrome enamels. Double intertwined reeded handle with terminals. Leeds Pottery. Circa 1780.
H. 30.2 W. 24.2 C.60&A–1947
Purchased from the A. L. Allen Collection.

14. Tea caddy with similar decoration to C.60&A–1947. Leeds Pottery. Circa 1780.
H. 13 W. 7.8 150&A–1874
Purchased from the Haliburton Collection.

15. Soup plate with moulded "Shell Edge", painted in the centre with a figure of Flora, surrounded by a band of leaves. Around the rim is a border of rose sprigs alternating with rococo cartouches with diapered fillings. Enamelled in two greens, magenta, grey, black, and yellow, probably by an outside decorator. Wedgwood (marked), Etruria. Circa 1780.
D. 24 Circ.442–1967
Mrs. M. B. Sargeant Bequest.

16. Large jug painted with a floral spray on either side in polychrome enamels. Across the front is painted a rococo cartouche enclosing the words, "John Smith. Hookinorton in Oxfordshire. 1773", in black enamel. Lip moulded in the form of a mask. Loop handle with terminal. Probably Leeds Pottery or Derby Pottery, Cockpit Hill. 1773.
H. 19 W. 19 Circ.1025–1924

Case I: Plain Creamware

1. Wall p[ocket] moulded in the shape of a cornucop[ia]. Relief decoration of ribbands and an urn. Probably Leeds Pottery. Circa 1775.
L. 22.3 W. 12 3122–1853
Purchased from the Bandinel Collection.

2. Large pl[ate] with moulded and pierced decoration. [Fac]tory unknown. Circa 1775.
D. 25.3 Circ.394–1968

3. Covered vegetable dish and stand. Moulded and pierced decoration. Double intertwined and twisted handles with terminals, fruit-shaped knob. Probably Leeds Pottery. Circa 1780.
L. 27.5 H. 15.7 C.881&A&B–1925
Mrs. Mary Grieg Gift.

4. Water bottle with fluted base, and applied moulded floral swags and masks. Probably Leeds Pottery. Circa 1780.
H. 24.3 D. 14 Circ.392–1968

5. Dish moulded in the form of a leaf. Possibly Leeds Pottery. Circa 1780.
L. 13 W. 10.2 C.860–1925
Mrs. Mary Grieg Gift.

6. Covered bowl with moulded and pierced decoration. Flower knob. Probably Leeds Pottery. Circa 1780.
H. 14 D. 13.2 C.591&A–1922
Colonel Sir Charles Wyndham Murray Gift.

7. Plate with pierced and roulette decoration. Possibly Leeds Pottery. Circa 1780.
D. 20.9 C.865–1925
Mrs. Mary Grieg Gift.

8. Covered butter dish and stand. Moulded and pierced decoration. Double intertwined and twisted handles with terminals. Convolvulous flower knob. Probably Leeds Pottery. Circa 1780.
H. 8.6 D. of butter dish 12.5
Circ.393&A–1968 Circ.367–1953
J. E. H. Dykes Gift (367).

9. Oval fruit dish with moulded and pierced decoration. Double intertwined and twisted handles with terminals. Probably Leeds Pottery. Circa 1780.
L. 25.3 W. 19.4 Circ. 394–1953.
J. E. H. Dykes Gift.

10. Dish with moulded and pierced decoration. Probably Leeds Pottery. Circa 1780.
D. 21.4 C.869–1925
Mrs. Mary Grieg Gift.

11. Circular basket with moulded base. Josiah Wedgwood (marked), Etruria. Circa 1790.
H. 4.3 D. 17.5 2312–1901
Museum of Practical Geology Collection.

12. Cruet set. The stand has moulded and pierced decoration with places for five cruets. Possibly Leeds Pottery. Circa 1790.
H. 26.4 Leeds Loan 5 to 51

13. Strainer, moulded in the shape of a sunflower, with pierced centre. Leeds Pottery (marked). Circa 1790.
D. 17.1 C.65–1947
Mrs. Lilian S. Kinsman Gift.

14. Vase moulded in the shape of an urn. Relief decoration of acanthus, and medallions with drapery. Staffordshire, perhaps James and Charles Whitehead, Hanley. Circa 1795.
H. 16.9 W. 9 C.595–1922
Colonel Sir Charles Wyndham Murray Gift.

15. Rectangular dish with moulded decoration of two fishes. Shorthose and Heath (marked), Hanley. Circa 1800.
L. 25.8 W. 15.5 C.902–1925.
Mrs. Mary Grieg Gift.

Case IV: Transfer-printed Creamware

1. Sauce terrine with moulded "Feather", and reeded borders. Acanthus scroll handles, and knob in the shape of an artichoke. Black-printed over the glaze with engravings of peacocks and exotic birds. Traces of gilding. Probably Josiah Wedgwood, Burslem; printed in Liverpool. Circa 1765.
H. 10.7 W. 15.5 C.590&A–1922
Colonel Sir Charles Wyndham Murray Gift.

2. Dish moulded in the shape of a leaf. Black-printed over the glaze with an engraving of an exotic bird, and with painted flower sprigs in black. Probably Josiah Wedgwood, Burslem; printed in Liverpool. Circa 1765.
L. 18.5 W. 14 Circ. 110–1925
Frederic D. Harford Gift.

3. Dish, moulded with rosette in centre and "Feather Edge". Black-printed over the glaze with engravings of peacocks in a vignetted landscape. Staffordshire; printed in Liverpool. Circa 1765.
D. 27 2293–1901
Museum of Practical Geology Collection.

4. Teapot, black-printed over the glaze with an engraved portrait of John Wesley, signed "Green, Liverpool", on one side; on the other, a text surrounded by decorative rococo scrollwork. Loop handle with scales, cauliflower spout. Josiah Wedgwood, Etruria; printed in Liverpool. Circa 1775.
H. 14.4 L. 21 3613&A–1901
Museum of Practical Geology Collection.

5. Teapot, black-printed over the glaze with engraved versions of the "Tea Party" on one side, and "The Shepherd" on the reverse. Cauliflower spout, double intertwined handle with terminals, flower knob. Staffordshire or possibly Leeds pottery. Circa 1775.
H. 14 L. 20 Stoke-on-Trent Loan 4A

6. Plate, "Royal" shape. Printed in reddish-brown over the glaze with an engraving of Fountains Abbey, and with an engraved border of flower sprays. Leeds Pottery ("Leeds Pottery" in the engraving). Circa 1780.
D. 25 Leeds Loan 3

7. Tankard. Black-printed over the glaze with an engraving of a landscape with a cottage, in the foreground is a basket-maker, to the right is a shepherd with sheep. Double intertwined and reeded handle with terminals. Probably Leeds Pottery. Circa 1780.
H. 16.2 D. 16 Circ.29–1962

8. Teapot, black-printed over the glaze with an engraving of "The Fortune-Teller" on one side, and "The Twelve Houses of Heaven" on the reverse. Mauve, brick red, green, and yellow enamels, and gilt, have been added by hand. Double intertwined handle with terminals, shell spout, flower knob. Probably Leeds Pottery, engraving by William Greatbatch. Circa 1780.
H. 13 L. 16.5 Leeds Loan 1A

9. Oval plate with basket edge, printed in purple over the glaze with an engraving of a classical landscape with figures amongst ruins. Josiah Wedgwood (marked), Etruria; printed in Liverpool. Circa 1780.
L. 29.5 W. 25.2 Circ.444–1967
Mrs. M. B. Sargeant Bequest.

10. Large teapot or punch pot, black-printed on one side with an engraving of "Conjugal Felicity" signed "Thos: Fletcher Shelton", and on the reverse, "Gretna Green or the Red-Hot Marriage". Staffordshire; printed by Thomas Fletcher. Circa 1800.
H. 23.8 L. 32.5 Circ. 593&A–1961

11. Beer jug, black-printed with an engraving of "Commerce Revived" on one side; on the reverse, a ship in full sail with enamel colours added by hand; on the front is a printed wreath enclosing a painted monogram. Probably Staffordshire. Circa 1805.
H. 23 L. 24 3642–1901
Museum of Practical Geology Collection.

12. Tile, transfer-printed over the glaze with an engraving in sepia of a female allegorical figure entitled "Plenty", signed "T. Baddeley, Hanley". Staffordshire; printed by Thomas Baddeley. Circa 1805.
L. 18 W. 18 Stoke-on-Trent Loan 5

13. Tankard, printed in sepia with a design including a ship in full sail, figures of "Peace" and "Plenty", and the motto: *"May Peace with Plenty On Our Nation smile & Trade with Commerce bless the British Isle"* Signed Dawson & Co., Low Ford. Enamel colours added by hand. John Dawson, Low Ford Pottery, Sunderland. Circa 1815.
H. 13.5 D. 14 Circ.594–1968

14. Jug, printed in magenta with a design showing ploughing and milking, etc., and the motto: *He that by the plough would thrive Himself must either hold or drive.* On the reverse, rococo scrollwork enclosing the verse, *Let the wealthy and great, etc.* Gold lustre decoration added by hand. Probably Staffordshire. Circa 1820.
H. 13.9 W. 15.8 C.23–1944
Miss Helena Hill Bequest.

VICTORIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM LIBRARY SCIENCE

Case V ate Creamware

1. Fruit b nd stand, with vine and hop border pat painted in sepia enamel. Josiah Spo marked), Stoke-on-Trent. Circa 1780.
H. 12 L. asket and stand. 29.5
C.187&A-1 2
C. B. Farmer ift.

2. Plate with order pattern of simulated flutes painted in sepia enamel and gold. Josiah Wedgwood (marked), Etruria. Circa 1780.
D. 20 Stoke-on-Trent Loan 1

3. Sauce boat, with border pattern of scales painted in yellow, green, and sepia enamels. Josiah Spode (marked), Stoke-on-Trent. Circa 1790.
H. 16.8 L. 19.6 Circ. 259&A-1916
Algernon Brent Bequest.

4. Large mug with border pattern of conventional flowers, painted in blue and sepia enamels. Probably Leeds Pottery. Circa 1800.
H. 10.5 D. 19.3 3131-1901
Museum of Practical Geology Collection.

5. Dish, part of a supper set, with painting of a "Persian Iris" (inscribed on back) in polychrome enamels. Possibly John Shorthose, Hanley. Circa 1800.
L. 31.5 W. 17 C.89-1956
J. A. Tulk Bequest.

6. Plate with border pattern of conventional leaves painted in sepia enamels. Leeds Pottery (marked). Circa 1800.
D. 20.7 Leeds Loan 2

7. Mug with border pattern of conventional leaves, and with a wheatsheaf and agricultural implements painted in brick red, yellow, black, and blue enamels. Inscribed in black enamel with "God speed the Plough" and "Joseph Richardson". Probably Leeds Pottery. Circa 1800.
H. 10.5 D. 9.8 Leeds Loan 4

8. Oval dish with painting in the centre in brown enamel of a landscape (title on back: "View at Dove-Dale Derbyshire"), surrounded with a vine-pattern border painted in sepia, brick red enamels, and gold. Cambrian Pottery (marked), Swansea. Circa 1805.
L. 27.9 W. 20.4 Circ.261-1916
Algernon Brent Bequest.

9. Fruit basket and stand, with border pattern of leaves painted in black and green enamels. Staffordshire. Circa 1810.
H. 9.4 L. of basket and stand. 24.5
3565&A-1901
Museum of Practical Geology Collection.

10. Pocket flask with marbled decoration in brown and buff-coloured slips. Possibly Leeds Pottery. Circa 1800.
L. 14.4 W. 11.7 Circ.766-1925

11. Tankard with engine-turned pattern filled with dark brown oxide and bands of red-brown slip and copper oxide. Probably Leeds Pottery. Circa 1810.
H. 13.6 D. 13.7 Circ.792-1925

12. Plate with moulded basket-work edge. Painted in the centre with a landscape with figures in the foreground in polychrome enamels. Herculaneum Pottery, Liverpool. Circa 1810.
D. 19.2 Stoke-on-Trent Loan 2

13. Oval fluted dish, painted with flower sprays in polychrome enamels. Sewell and Donkin (marked), St. Anthony's Pottery, Newcastle-on-Tyne. Circa 1820.
L. 29.4 W. 21 Circ. 92-1968

14. Plate with painting of conventionalised roses in blue, green, black, and yellow enamels. Wedgwood (marked), Etruria. Circa 1820.
D. 20.6 Circ. 586-1968

15. Scent bottle in the shape of a barrel with painted decoration of flowers in polychrome enamels, and the initials "J.H. 1836" added in pink lustre. Probably painted by William Fifield junior. Bristol Pottery. 1836.
H. 11.2 W. 9.7 Circ.1400-1923

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